

# SC051513

Registered provider: Nottinghamshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties and/or a hearing impairment.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 23 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

### Inspection dates: 15 and 16 December 2021

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>requires improvement to be good</b> |
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|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | requires improvement to be good |
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|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | requires improvement to be good |
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 7 May 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 07/05/2019      | Full            | Good                 |
| 05/06/2018      | Full            | Good                 |
| 10/07/2017      | Full            | Good                 |
| 12/10/2016      | Full            | Good                 |

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

Children have experienced some disruption to their relationships with staff. This is due to changes within the staff team. There are some staff and managers away from work due to illness. The concerns with staffing are being resolved, with a full management and staff team coming into support the home from another service.

Staff have not always fully understood children's needs and have not followed behaviour support plans. Appropriate support has not been provided, at times, when children's behaviour has escalated, necessitating the need for physical intervention. The approach to behaviour management has now started to improve under the new management arrangements.

Staff spend quality time with children. Children are starting to develop positive relationships with the staff and have been able to discuss their previous experiences and confide in staff. One child said: 'I really like it here, I think I have settled so quickly because staff are so nice.' Another child said: 'It's much nicer here than where I was before, staff are really nice.'

Children enjoy a range of leisure activities and have enriching experiences. Staff encourage children to participate in community-based activities and join local clubs. These varied opportunities help to improve children's confidence and health and enhance their social engagement.

Children receive support to meet their individual healthcare needs. This includes specialist healthcare support and services. Staff have a good understanding of children's health needs.

Children are making good progress in education. The staff have introduced a reward system to encourage and promote improved educational attendance. One parent said: 'In the last two years, my child had only been to school 10 times and now goes every day.' The acting manager works closely with education providers to coordinate approaches to behaviour management; this prevents children being sent home. The staff undertake individual work with children to understand the importance of education for them now and in the future.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Children's risk assessments do not provide staff with clear guidance or strategies to keep children safe. This fails to ensure that risks are managed consistently by staff and appropriate support is in place to help keep children safe.

Safeguarding processes were not followed, on one occasion. There was a delay in sharing information with the designated officer from the local authority. There is now

improved communication with all agencies. Managers have learned from mistakes and improvements in practice have now been embedded to prevent a reoccurrence.

Children know how to make a complaint. They can identify a trusted adult that they could speak to if they had any concerns or worries. Complaints made by children are thoroughly investigated. The children concerned are kept apprised of the actions taken. This instils children with the confidence that if they complain, they will be listened to and taken seriously.

The manager has completed a detailed location risk assessment. When conducting it, she canvassed the views of the children, local police and other professionals. The assessment is informative for staff in the event of children going missing. It highlights children's specific risks and vulnerabilities.

The staff report that the new acting manager is visible and responsive. Staff say that the management style of the new acting manager is engaging and overall a positive change. Better communication between staff and managers improves the safeguarding culture of the home.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The registered manager and assistant manager are currently away from the home. Interim management arrangements have been brought in by leaders from another home within the organisation. The acting manager has quickly developed an action plan to tackle some shortfalls identified and to improve the service. The manager and team have met four statutory requirements made at the last visit. However, requirements have been made at this inspection relating to the leadership and management and the protection of children standard.

The acting manager has clear and realistic plans for improving the consistency and quality of care. Meaningful steps have already been taken to address the most urgent issues, particularly those that relate to the home's safeguarding ethos. Managers communicate with staff in an open and transparent manner. Staff have more confidence in managers. This is leading to improved morale within the team. Managers and staff know what needs to be done to improve the standards of care for children.

The management team has started to implement improved quality assurance monitoring systems. This will lead to improved management oversight, review and evaluation of the care being provided. These improvements are in their infancy and will require time to embed.

The manager has not ensured that all staff have undertaken relevant training in a timely manner. Several staff have not completed important training to support them to manage the presenting behaviours and risks to children. This training is now scheduled.

Staff have not received regular supervision. This has started to improve, although it was identified that supervision records do not yet include reflective discussions about the staff members' care practice. This is a missed opportunity to support staff to learn from incidents and improve the care they provide.

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Due date        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>This is specifically in relation to ensuring that risk assessments reflect the needs and identified risks of children and provide clear guidance to staff on how risks are to be managed. Additionally, it relates to ensuring that referrals are made to safeguarding bodies within appropriate timescales.</p> | 17 January 2022 |
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 17 January 2022 |

ensure that staff have the experience, qualification and skills to meet the needs of each child;

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h))

This specifically relates to managers embedding monitoring systems in the home to improve the quality of care.

## Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that systems are in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards'.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC051513

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Nottinghamshire County Council

**Registered provider address:** County Hall, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP

**Responsible individual:** Devon Allen

**Registered manager:** Diane Beckitt

## Inspector

Zoey Lee, Social Care Inspector

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